



FARMINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 192	NEPN CODE: JE
POLICIES AND REGULATIONS	

Students

Student Attendance

I. PURPOSE

The school board believes that it is the student's right and responsibility to be in school. Further, the school board believes that regular school attendance is directly related to success in academic work, benefits students socially, provides opportunities for important communications between teachers and students and establishes regular habits of dependability important to the future of the student. The purpose of this policy is to encourage regular school attendance. This policy also recognizes that class attendance is a joint responsibility to be shared by the student, parent or guardian, teacher and administrators.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Responsibilities

1. Student's Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to attend all assigned classes and study halls on time, every day that school is in session and to be aware of and follow the correct procedures when absent from an assigned class or study hall. Finally, it is the student's responsibility to request any missed assignments due to an absence.

2. Parent or Guardian's Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to ensure the student is attending school on time, and to inform the school in the event of a student absence, and to work cooperatively with the school and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

3. Teacher's Responsibility

It is the teacher's responsibility to take daily classroom attendance and to maintain accurate attendance records in each assigned class and study hall.

It is also the teacher's responsibility to be familiar with school procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly. It is also

the teacher's responsibility to provide any student who has been absent with any missed assignments upon a timely request. Finally, it is the teacher's responsibility to work cooperatively with the student, student's parent or guardian and other school personnel to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

4. Administrator's Responsibility

- a. It is the administrator's responsibility to require students to attend all assigned classes and study halls. It is also the administrator's responsibility to be familiar with all procedures governing attendance and to apply these procedures uniformly to all students, to maintain accurate records on student attendance and to prepare a list of the previous day's absences stating the status of each. Finally, it is the administrator's responsibility to inform the student's parent or guardian of the student's attendance and to work cooperatively with them and the student to solve attendance problems.
- b. In accordance with the Minnesota Compulsory Instruction Law, Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, the students of the school district are REQUIRED to attend all assigned classes and/or study halls every day school is in session, unless the student has been excused by the school board from attendance because the student has already completed state and district standards required to graduate from high school, has withdrawn, or has a valid excuse for absence.

B. Definitions

1. Excused Absences

- a. To be considered an excused absence, the student's parent or legal guardian may be asked to verify, in writing, the reason for the student's absence from school. A note from a physician or a licensed mental health professional stating that the student cannot attend school is a valid excuse.
- b. The following reasons shall generally be sufficient to constitute excused absences. The school administrator may request verification of the reason for the absence.
 - (1) Illness.
 - (2) Serious illness in the student's immediate family.
 - (3) A death or funeral in the student's immediate family or of a

close friend or relative.

- (4) Medical, dental treatment, or a counseling appointment.
- (5) Court appearances occasioned by family or personal action.
- (6) Religious instruction not to exceed three hours in any week.
- (7) Physical emergency conditions such as fire, flood, storm, etc.
- (8) Official school field trip or other school-sponsored outing.
- (9) Removal of a student pursuant to a suspension. Suspensions are to be handled as excused absences and students will be permitted to complete make-up work.
- (10) Observation of religious holiday.
- (11) Family emergencies.
- (12) Active duty in any military branch of the United States.
- (13) A student's condition that requires ongoing treatment for a mental health diagnosis.

b. Consequences of Excused Absences

- (1) Students whose absences are excused are required to make up all assignments missed or to complete alternative assignments as deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher.
- (2) Work missed because of absence must be made up within a reasonable amount of time following the absence, as determined by the school. Any work not completed within the required period shall result in "no credit" for the missed assignment. However, the building principal or the classroom teacher may extend the time allowed for completion of make-up work in the case of an extended illness or other extenuating circumstances.

2. Unexcused Absences

a. The following are examples of absences which generally will not be excused, subject to the discretion of the administrator:

- (1) Truancy. An absence by a student which was not approved by the parent and/or the school district.
- (2) Any absence in which the student failed to comply with any reporting requirements of the school district's attendance procedures.
- (3) Work at home.
- (4) Work at a business, except under a school-sponsored work release program.
- (5) Vacations (unless pre-approved by the administrator).
- (6) Personal trips to schools or colleges (unless pre-approved by the administrator).
- (7) Absences resulting from cumulated unexcused tardies for purposes of this policy, unexcused tardies shall be converted to unexcused absences as follows: At the elementary level four unexcused tardies at the beginning of the school day in any semester shall equal one unexcused absence. At the middle and high school levels, three unexcused tardies to the same class period in any semester will equal one unexcused absence.
- (8) Any other absence not defined as excused in this policy.

b. Consequences of Unexcused Absences

- (1) Absences resulting from official suspension will be handled in accordance with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56.
- (2) Days during which a student is suspended from school shall not be counted in a student's total cumulated unexcused absences.
- (3) In cases of recurring unexcused absences of an elementary student, the administration may report the problem to Dakota County Social Services. In cases of recurring unexcused absences of a middle school or high school

student, the administration may request the county attorney to file a petition with the juvenile court, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes.

(4) Students with unexcused absences shall be subject to discipline in the following manner, subject to administrative discretion:

(a) At the secondary level, a student may not be allowed to make up work missed due to an unexcused absence, potentially resulting in a loss of credit for missing assignments.

(b) After five unexcused absences in a term, the student may be required to attend a conference with the student's parent and school administrator, in order to develop an attendance contract.

(c) If the result of a grade reduction or loss of credit has the effect of an expulsion, the school district will follow the procedures set forth in the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40-121A.56.

C. Tardiness

1. Definition: Students are tardy if they are not in their assigned areas at designated times.

2. Procedures for Reporting Tardiness

a. Students tardy at the start of school must report to the school office for an admission slip.

b. Tardiness between periods will be recorded by the teacher.

3. Excused Tardiness

Valid excuses for tardiness are identical to valid reasons for excused absences (see section B.1, above).

4. Unexcused Tardiness

An unexcused tardiness is failing to be in an assigned area at the designated time class period commences without a valid excuse.

The following are other examples of tardiness which will not be excused, subject to the discretion of the administrator: oversleeping, missing the

bus, traffic congestion, car trouble, weather (except in the case of school cancellation), and locker malfunction.

D. Participation in Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored On-the-Job Training Programs

1. This policy applies to all students involved in any extracurricular activity scheduled either during or outside the school day and any school-sponsored on-the-job training programs.
2. School-initiated absences will be accepted and participation permitted.
3. A student may not participate in any activity or program if he or she has an unexcused absence from any class during the day.
4. If a student is suspended from any class, he or she may not participate in any activity or program that day.

III. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

Copies of this policy shall be made available to all students and parents at the commencement of each school year. This policy shall also be posted on the District's website and shall be available upon request in each principal's office.

IV. REQUIRED REPORTING

A. Continuing Truant

Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 provides that a continuing truant is a student who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 120A.05, without valid excuse within a single school year for:

1. three days if the child is in elementary school; or
2. Three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, or high school.

B. Reporting Responsibility

When a student is initially classified as a continuing truant, Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 provides that the school attendance officer or other designated school official shall notify the student's parent or legal guardian, by first class mail or other reasonable means, of the following:

1. That the child is truant;

2. That the parent or guardian should notify the school if there is a valid excuse for the child's absences;
3. That the parent or guardian is obligated to compel the attendance of the child at school pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 and parents or guardians who fail to meet this obligation may be subject to prosecution under Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
4. That this notification serves as the notification required by Minn. Stat. §120A.34;
5. That alternative educational programs and services may be available in the district;
6. That the parent or guardian has the right to meet with appropriate school personnel to discuss solutions to the child's truancy;
7. That if the child continues to be truant, the parent and child may be subject to juvenile court proceedings under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260;
8. that if the child is subject to juvenile court proceedings, the child may be subject to suspension, restriction, or delay of the child's driving privilege pursuant to Minn. Stat. §260C.201; and
9. That it is recommended that the parent or guardian accompany the child to school and attend classes with the child for one day.

C. Habitual Truant

1. A habitual truant is a child under the age of 16 years who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, or high school, or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school.
2. A school district administrator or designee shall refer a habitual truant child and the child's parent or legal guardian to appropriate services and procedures, under Minn. Stat. Ch. 260A.

Date Adopted: 07/25/05

Dates Revised: 10/09/06, 12/14/09

Next Scheduled Revision: 12/13

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120A.05 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.24 (Reporting)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.26 (Enforcement and Prosecution)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.28 (School Boards and Teachers, Duties)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.30 (Attendance Officers)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.34 (Violations; Penalties)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.40 - 121A.56 (Pupil Fair Dismissal Act)
Minn. Stat. § 260C.007, Subd. 19 (Habitual Truant Defined)
Minn. Stat. § 260C.201 (Dispositions; Children in Need of Protection or Services or Neglected and in Foster Care)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.02 (Definitions)
Minn. Stat. § 260A.03 (Notice to Parent or Guardian When Child is Continuing Truant)
Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565, 95 S.Ct. 729 (1975)
Slocum v. Holton Board of Education, 429 N.W.2d 607 (Mich. App. Ct. 1988)
Campbell v. Board of Education of New Milford, 475 A.2d 289 (Conn. 1984)
Hamer v. Board of Education of Township High School District No. 113, 66 Ill. App.3d 7 (1978)
Gutierrez v. School District R-1, 585 P.2d 935 (Co. Ct. App. 1978)
Knight v. Board of Education, 38 Ill. App. 3d 603, 348 N.E.2d 299 (1976)
Dorsey v. Bale, 521 S.W.2d 76 (Ky. 1975)

Contract References: _____

Cross References: MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506 (Student Discipline)
ISD #192 Policy #JAF – Student Discipline